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In Memory of the Queen

AN ADDRESS

Delivered in the Town Hall, Regina, on the 2nd of
February, 1901, the day of the funeral of Her
Late Imperial Majesty, by

NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN

of the Middle Temple and of
Osgoode Hall, K.C.



REGINA
The West Company, Limited, Printers and Publishers
1901



MR. DAVIN IN EARLY LIFE, WHEN A LONDON JOURNALIST

UNVEILING OF THE
Davin Memorial

BEECHWOOD CEMETERY
OTTAWA

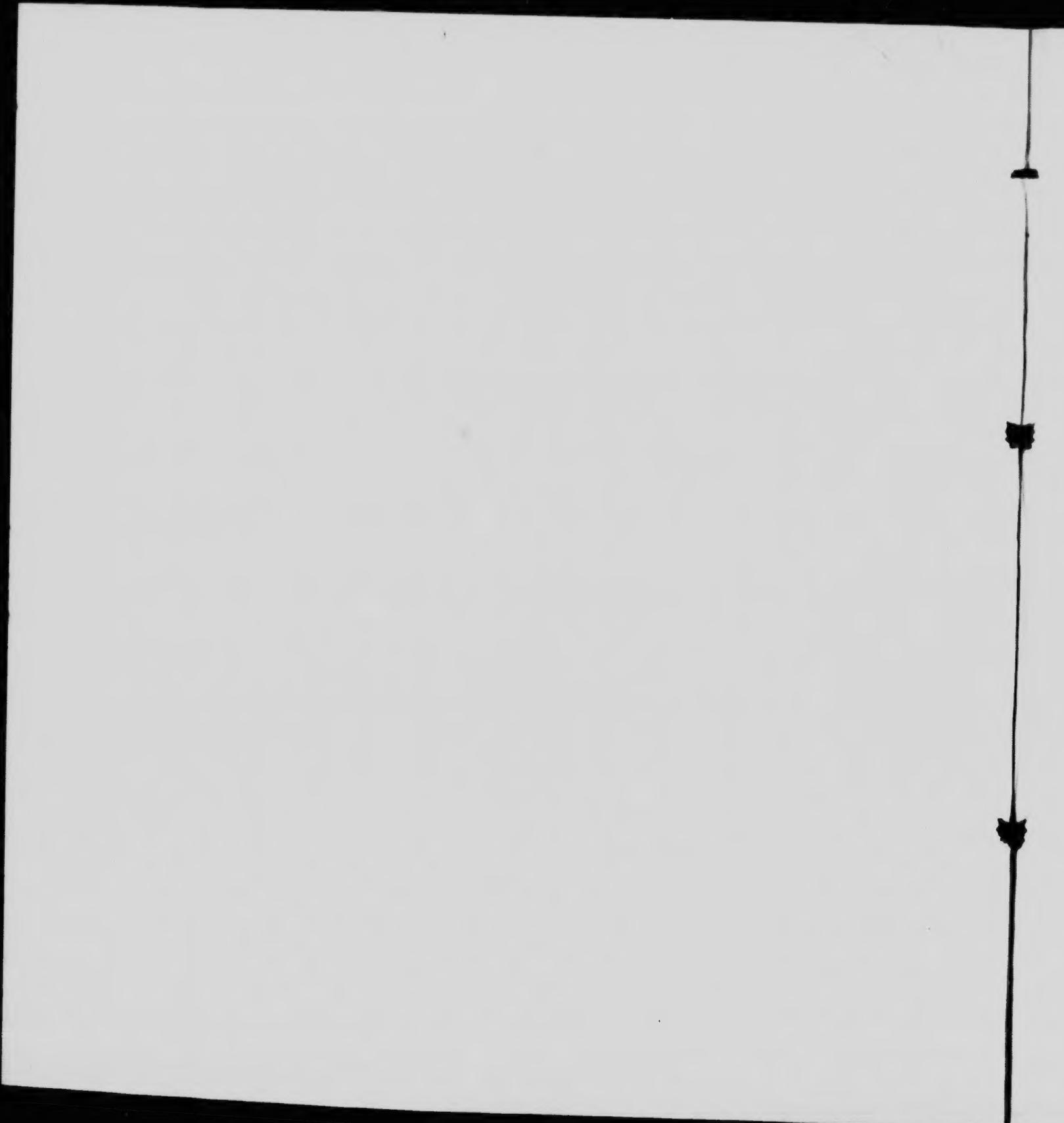
THURSDAY, JULY THE SECOND, 1903 *

THE COMMITTEE WOULD FEEL HONORED BY YOUR
PRESENCE AT THE CEREMONY

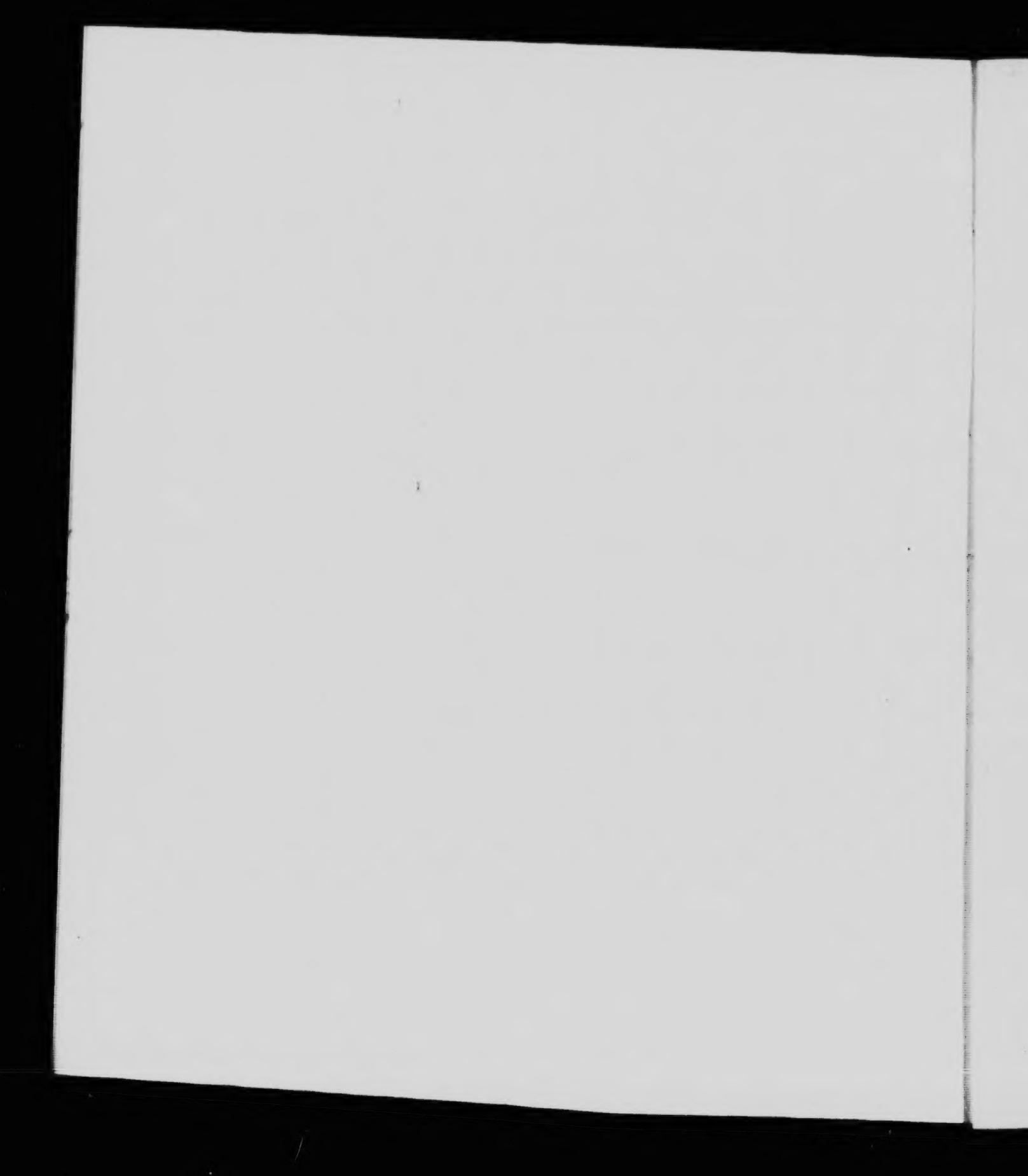
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ANNOUNCED
LATER

Wm. J. MacLean

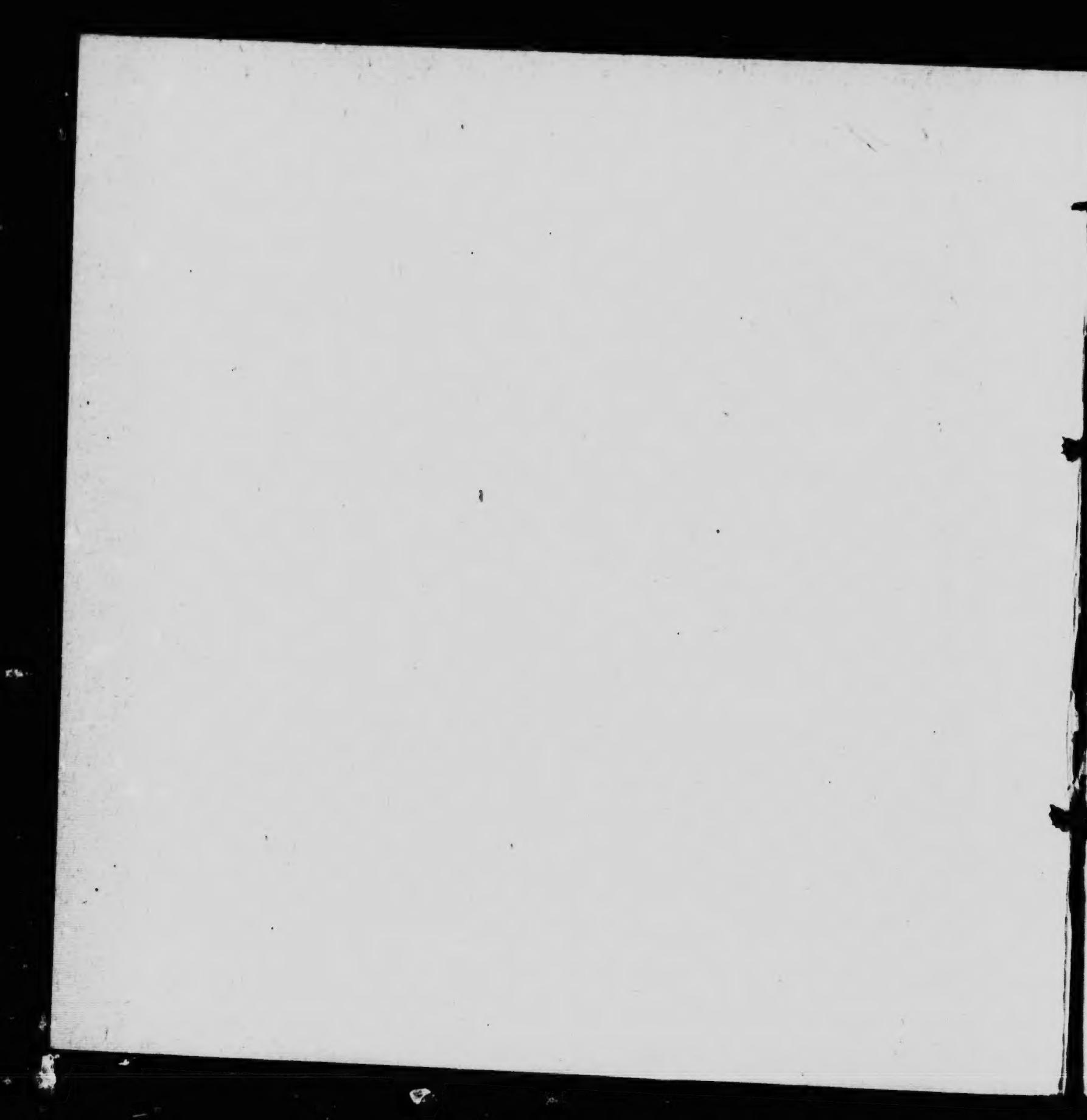
HON.-SECRETARY







DEDICATED
to
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL
(High Commissioner of Canada)
the noble embodiment
of
THE WESTERN MAN
and of
CANADIAN IMPERIALISM



IN MEMORY OF THE QUEEN

We are apt to think of the Queen as having had a long career of uniform happiness and uninterrupted success. Alas! her life has been no exception to the common lot. Her reign has indeed been glorious and beneficent without parallel. But though in every field the nation under her guidance has shown unexampled energy, raising and enlarging human knowledge and liberty, dignity and happiness; in war, at the end always victorious; from the day she ascended the throne until the great releasor came, bearing in his cold hand the well earned rest, she had ever and again the gravest causes for anxiety; she knew trouble and sorrow and anguish as Queen and wife and mother; death did not pass the palace any more than the mansion or the cottage; her husband, her favourite daughter, her grandson, her son preceding her to the halls of the dead. She has been shot at five times. The early disasters of the Crimean war, the inglorious retreat and massacre in the Khyber pass,

the abandonment of Gordon, Majuba, how must they have stung the British woman and Queen! Among her latest utterances, the King tells us, were inquiries about Kitchener and his army.

She met affliction and worry and reverses, triumphs and victories, great expansion and vast accretions of empire with an equal mind. She was the most popular and powerful monarch, not only in the line of our own Empire, but in Europe and in the world. Her influence was unbounded; her prestige beyond comparison; her authority equal to her unequalled fortune, for everything and everyone in Christendom compared with her was junior and recent and troubled. When she ascended the throne Louis Phillippe was reigning in France. She was a renowned queen at the time of the revolution of '48. She had to consider how she would treat the author of the Coup d'etat in 1851, and twenty years afterwards how best she could alleviate the misfortunes of his wife, the Empress Eugenie, and for twenty years she has

looked out from an unshaken throne in the midst of an ordered state on the changes which have followed each other in France. In 1837 Prussia was but a small kingdom. She had been reigning for thirty years before Bismarck made it a great factor in Europe, and for more than forty before it took its place at the head of the German Empire, whose present Emperor, her grandson, is only twelve years on the throne. When the girl queen, in her first speech, referred to chartist disturbances, Italy was under the domination of Austria and Mazzini was at work with his young Italian party. Thirty-three years passed before struggle, insurrection and war ended in an Italian kingdom. During all the time the Austro Hungarian Empire can scarcely be said to have had one quiet day and she had ruled eleven years when Francis Joseph succeeded Ferdinand. The present Czar of all the Russias was born in 1868 and ascended the throne in 1894, and his Czarina is the daughter of the Princess Alice. Neither in extreme youth, nor in extreme age, nor at any point within the interval, was there the least sign that all this vast power and

predominance, this height of rank, the boundless and just adulation which accompanied it, made her in the least giddy.

Her words, when the oaths a British Sovereign is bound to take had been administered to her in 1837, enable us to see the source of her success and of her marble imperviousness to the temptations and seductions which beset a throne.

"This awful responsibility," she said, "is imposed upon me so suddenly and at so early a period of my life that I should feel myself utterly oppressed by the burden were I not sustained by the hope that divine Providence, which has called me to this work, will give me strength for the performance of it, and that I shall find in the purity of my intentions and in my zeal for the public welfare that support and those resources which usually belong to a more mature age and to long experience."

It may be of interest to remark, that among the members of the Cabinet at her accession who listened to these simple noble words were Lord Minto, the grandfather of our present Governor-General, and the Right Honorable T.

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Spring-Rice, Chancellor of the Exchequer, the distinguished relative of two of our prominent citizens.

On that June morning, the demeanor of the young girl, who had within a few hours become the ruler of a mighty empire was so modest and so calm that it impressed all who witnessed it with profound admiration and the confidence of a glorious future. Sir Robert Peel said very beautifully of it: "There is something which art cannot imitate and lessons cannot teach." She was brought up well by a wise mother, in unobtrusive simplicity; her good natural abilities sedulously cultivated; taught every household duty; taught self-restraint; taught, as too few children amongst her humblest subjects are taught, the imperious need of self denial. Well grounded in religious principles, in her reflective mind, the salutary lesson was early and deeply implanted of the perils of greatness. What a thing to be able to say of her that all the confidence inspired and all the sanguine anticipations excited she, during two generations of men, unfailingly justified and fulfilled. How wonderful that what admiration dreamed, and fancy feigned, and enthusiastic

hope conceived, the sober prose of more than three score years should endorse, honor, make good, nay, outdistance by a glorious monotony of unfaltering zeal and tireless duty.

The Rev. Sydney Smith, preaching at that time in the great Metropolitian Cathedral of St. Paul's, said:

"What limits to the glory and happiness of our native land, if the creator should in his mercy have placed in the heart of this royal woman the rudiments of wisdom and mercy; and if, giving them time to expand and to bless our children's children with her goodness, he should grant to her a long sojourn on earth and leave her to reign over us till she is well stricken in years! What glory! What happiness! What joy! What bounty of God!"

This reads at once like a prophecy and a prayer. How completely has the votive forecast been realized. Not undeserved was the enthusiasm of affection which burst from all her subjects to greet her accession. Taking counsel with hope they let expectation usurp the place of gratitude. To-day the subjects of King Edward all over the empire taking counsel from experience and

recalling her protracted reign, devoted to the good of her country and mankind, and won and fascinated by a personality so effective, so pure, so simple and so noble, are filled with thankfulness, gratitude, and fervent love for her memory.

She united in her opulent nature and position so many things which challenge the allegiance of the heart, the subtlest secret of the universal ardour of affection which fills and thrills with tenderness the core of the world, being profounder than power or rank or efficiency—her intense humanity. If I may use the language, she was an unassuming Queen, a mighty Empress, who, fully aware of the importance of ceremony and that dignity of bearing is a virtue in one in her position, amply expressed it and secured its ends and yet put on no style. Crown, jewels, golden tissue, purple robe, the pomp of royal ceremonies, the august splendor of Imperial conditions could not overshadow the girl, nor subsequently the mother, and the woman overtopped the ruler, the home the palace, and the kind, pure warm hearted head of the first household in the world loomed so large in her

loving humanness as to throw the empress into the shade.

On one occasion, on the eve of a fete at Balmoral, in one of her rambles around the estate she went into a cottage where a peasant woman was ironing a shirt and said to her: "Please get me a drink of milk." The answer was: "I canna do it. The dairy is outside and I am ironing the buzzom of my man's shirt. He is going to see the Queen tomorrow and if I leave it I canna put the glaze on it." "I can put the gloss on," said the Queen, taking the iron out of her hand, "while you get me the milk." The guid man never wore the shirt, for his wife learned soon afterwards who her visitor was and the shirt is kept sacred to this day.

When she came to the throne the Court for two reigns had not been what a Court should be. In the country discontent and misery were wide-spread. There were Chartist risings and insurrections. Loyalty to the monarchy had become impaired. The poor in the mining and manufacturing districts were in a worse condition than slavery. The agricultural laborer and his wife and children were ill paid, ill fed, oppressed and rob-

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bed. The dwellings of the working classes in the towns and of the farm laborers in the country outraged health, decency, morals, the commonest humanity. The people were uneducated. Crime was rampant. The amount of juvenile dilinquency was frightful. In Ireland the tenantry were ground down and O'Connell's repeal agitation was at its height. The great vehicle of transportation was the stage coach. There were only 3,000 post offices in England and Wales, while the number of parishes was 11,000. The number of letters in 1837 was four letters per head per annum in England and Wales, three in Scotland and one in Ireland. There were practically no railways and of course no telegraphs. The quickest way of sending the news of the coronation to Paris was by carrier pigeon. The two Canadas were in rebellion. In opening parliament in November, 1837, the Queen said: "I recommend to your serious consideration the state of the Province of Lower Canada." On the 22nd of December the government announced in both Houses that there was an open rebellion in Lower Canada. The members of democratic opinions declared in

favor of England's retirement from the continent of America. Sir William Molesworth said: "Great would be the advantages of an amicable separation of the two countries." Oppressive religious disabilities still existed. The late king, like his predecessors, clung to personal rule.

This girl of eighteen at once inaugurated a new era. She made herself the ideal of what a constitutional sovereign should be. She put an end forever to personal power. The principle of religious liberty and equality has been fully asserted. She at once made a court where St. Paul or St. Theresa would find nothing to be shocked at. Loyalty to the monarchy and to the person of the sovereign became strong and universal. The condition of miners, of factory hands, of agricultural laborers, and of children was meliorated. Education was provided for the people by the state. Crime was lessened. The rebellion repressed, Canada received responsible government, and, instead of five scattered provinces with rival tariffs and half of them in rebellion, today we have a mighty confederation with the resources of a vast state, as

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populous as England when she set forth on her career as a world power, abounding in prosperity and development of every kind and which, instead of rebelling, sends across the equator heroic contingents to fight the battles of the empire.

The agrarian legislation of the reign has not left a land grievance in Ireland. I well remember in 1849, then a little boy of six years, being driven into town to see the Queen. She drove through the streets of Cork amid vast crowds and I was held up that I might see her. She was then slight and I vividly recall the sweet womanly face which looked out from the straw bonnet which was then the fashion. Last year she visited her Irish kingdom and was received with the hospitality and loyalty of a warm hearted people. In that island is King Edward's opportunity. Celtic peoples are monarchical; they attach themselves to persons rather than to principles; and if our gracious King, following in the lines of duty his august mother set, will show himself to his Irish subjects and win their hearts, he will do the greatest piece of work open to any man, however high his gen-

ius, within the empire. There is the territory for him to conquer; win with his own sword and spear a claim to the title of emperor; lay the foundation for all his subjects' gratitude for all time and by removing the one danger, leave behind him the glorious heritage of a united people.

As I have said, the Queen had been well brought up; trained to do right in scorn of consequence. She had a great regard for her first prime minister, Lord Melbourne. Nevertheless, when, on one occasion, he urged expediency as a reason for signing a document, she stopped him and said: "I have been taught, my lord, to judge what is right and wrong, but expediency is a word which I neither wish to hear nor understand."

Not without significance was the title of empress. Three-fourths of India have been acquired during her reign; Fiji, Guinea, Hong Kong, the vast tracts of Africa; much of Borneo. From being penal settlements Australasia has become a great Federation. When she ascended the throne the British army at home and abroad numbered only 130,000, officers and men; the population of

the empire was 127,000,000. To-day it is 390,000,000. Its area is three times that of Europe and one-fifth of that of the globe, and within its world-wide bounds liberty is complete.

Regina was called after the Queen. The North-West has been opened up within her reign. From the North-West has gone the largest number of those who in South Africa showed their Sovereign the value of colonies and that Canada is the empire's right hand. I am quite sure those of us in the North-West who were not fortunate enough to go to South Africa will not confine our expression of love and gratitude to words. The Daughters of the Empire, of which Madame Forget is honorary president, have already sent through my wife their contribution for a wreath to be laid by Lord Strathcona on the Queen's coffin, and I rejoice to be able to say they will at once inaugurate a movement for the erecting of a statue somewhere in the Territories, most appropriately in the capital, to her whose personality embodied the greatness, the expansion, the development, the social progress, the broad religious sentiment of the British empire of to-day.

The telegraph has enabled us all to stand by that august death bed, to kneel by it with her children and grandchildren and retainers, and there is hardly a man or woman or child in the empire who has not within these last days experienced a sense of personal loss and paid to the imperial dust the tribute of a tear, nay, felt for the dead mother of her people a sentiment of true filial regret. No pomp of ceremonies, no pall-bearing kings, no cavalcade of princes can dwarf the funeral to-day to a mere state funeral. A family whose units are millions follows to the grave its beloved and blameless head.

On such occasions there are always many poetical effusions, all of them doing credit at least to the hearts of the composers. Of these at this time the best I have seen comes from Ottawa. It makes no pretensions to art, but is touching in its sincerity and simplicity and is worth calling attention to because it expresses a sentiment which I suspect is almost universal. It is written by John Davis:

I've tried to sing God Save the King
But cannot, cannot yet,
Through sorrow for his mother whom
My heart will ne'er forget.

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She sleeps beneath the roses sweet,
The cold earth for her bed,
While holly bright and ivy green
Entwine above her head.

And when my thought turns to my Queen
As in the tomb she lies,
How good and faithful was her life,
A tear drops from my eyes.

I've tried to sing God Save the King,
But cannot, cannot yet,
Through sorrow for his mother whom
My heart will ne'er forget.

The loyalty of men whose lament is
not effervescent will be deep and enduring.

ing and King Edward himself, I am sure, would honor such genuine grief and honor us here, who, though we look forward with confidence to a glorious future under his rule, yet have to say that our hearts too are in that coffin where all that remains of so much goodness and greatness is closed up forever. She was one with humanity living, she is one with it dead. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, concludes us all.

